

# FIN CLIPS

**Interview with Veteran Instructor: Jim Porfilio**

**Mystery Fish Revealed**

**Fun Facts**

**Habits & Habitats**

**Wanted: Kid Artists & Writers**

**Interview with a Veteran Angler Education Instructor:**

## **Jim Porfilio The Long Lake Fishing Club**

**1. How long have you been an Angler Education Instructor?**

15 years

**2. How do you typically structure your programs- time & structure?**

We offer 2  $\frac{1}{2}$ - 3 hour morning sessions using a variety of two to three short (15- minute) activities: casting safety, fish ID, sections of the Angler Education books, a fun project). We structure it with 30 minutes of instruction, 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours in the boats, and then back to shore to tell fish tales of the day's fishing adventure.

**3. What supplies and materials do you use for programs?**

I make a special tackle box for the sessions- include hooks, pliers, sinkers, spool of extra #6 line, bobbers. Wear a nail clipper on a cord around the neck.

**4. How many volunteers typically help you and what is their time commitment?**

Some examples of what volunteers help out with include going out on the boats to help with fishing instruction, cooking over the campfire, and getting the food ready. Other volunteers include Master Anglers that have just completed the class and parent-volunteers.

**5. You have been very successful in fostering partnerships with Fishing Clubs, etc. How do you make that work and why is that important?**

Show interest in their club, interest group, hobbies, etc. Help the club out when they are putting on functions and let them know that they can call on you. When living on a lakeshore area, a feeling of unity can be fostered or is naturally there- use it and develop it.

**6. What advice to you have for new Angler Education Instructors?**

Remember that they can get help from the Angler Education office, the community, the University Extensions, and from friends- they are not alone.

**7. What are some of you favorite and most challenging experiences as an Angler Education Instructor?**

**Favorite Memories**

Seeing the expressions of joy or wonder when we bring them around our house and they see all the colorful boats lined up at our pier. You can see and almost hear the wheels go around: Are those for us? Which one do I get to go in? Pontoon or bass boat? Will that young handsome fellow with Master Angler patch be on my boat? I hope so [14 year old gal]! Those expressions tell it all and make all the planning worth the time it took.

## **Challenging Experience**

Getting the ok from Master Angler Program and 4-H to take the students into boats with non leaders that have not taken the short course offered by you guys and 4-H. We worked out an agreement that I would keep all boats in a vision area at all times. Aside: I think the concerns were very proper. (We also always try to have two adults with each group on the boat).

### **8. Any other thoughts or ideas you would like to share?**

Wear a fishing vest instead of a tackle box--it goes with you and things are always with you, plus it gives the child a new direction.

Remember that things will not always go right, and the kids need to know that.

Use pontoon boats if possible for variety and for ease of keeping the inexperienced casters farther apart for safety.

Get your wife or husband involved in the lessons or activities-- working as team helps the effort.

Have a simple party for the captains and their mates after the children leave--each mate brings a dish to pass--this social gathering insures the return of the captains and their mates for future sessions.

The kids love a campfire with a shore lunch, try hot dogs and the catch of the day. Interaction with the captains after their fishing experiences and fish tales can be told at this time.

Energetic adults can further the experience by cleaning and filleting fish and frying them on the open grill down at the shore

## Investigating Fish- What is it?

Check out the pictures below and use your investigative skills to figure out what kind of fish it is.



**Photo By: Ted Cummings**



**Illustrated By: Virgil Beck**

Photo By: Ted Cummings



The mystery fish is a STURGEON

These pictures were taken in Lake Monona and this sturgeon is nearly 6 feet long!

Read the sturgeon fun facts to learn more about this amazing fish.

## Sturgeon Fun Facts

Lake sturgeon grow larger and live longer than any other fish in Wisconsin. The record for the oldest lake sturgeon caught in Wisconsin (in Lake Winnebago in 1953) was 82 years old!

Compare this to the 152-year-old, 215 pound, 81-inch long old-timer from Lake of the Woods in Ontario, Canada- also in 1953.

The average age (years) / length (inches) of Sturgeon

|    |      |
|----|------|
| 1  | 11.0 |
| 3  | 23.0 |
| 5  | 33.0 |
| 10 | 40.0 |
| 15 | 47.0 |
| 20 | 51.0 |
| 25 | 56.0 |

Female sturgeon reach sexual maturity at 24 to 26 years old and about 55 inches long. Females spawn once every four, five, or six years. Males mature at about 15 years, when they are 45 inches long. Most males spawn every other year, while some do so every year.

### **Habits & Habitats**

Lake sturgeon do not have any teeth and rely on suction to feed. They feed on small organisms such as snails, insect larvae, leeches, small clams and other invertebrates. A lake sturgeon will drag its barbels or feelers over the lake or river bottom. As soon as these sensitive feelers touch food, the fish protrudes its tubular mouth and sucks up a snack.

### **Did You Know Sturgeon Leap?**

Lake sturgeon have a habit of leaping completely out of water until they appear to be standing on their tails, then landing with a resounding splash.

Fish experts theorize that the sturgeon may be trying to shake off lampreys; most adult sturgeons have one or more old lamprey scars and it is not uncommon to see six or more lampreys attached to one fish.

Young lake sturgeon caught in Wisconsin waters that drain into the Mississippi River are frequently confused with the smaller shovelnose sturgeon. This distinct species can be distinguished from the lake

sturgeon by the long, rounded, shovel-shaped snout and the bony plates that cover the caudal fin.

### **Want to Learn more about Sturgeon?**

Check out EEK!'s web page below for further information on Sturgeon  
<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/eek/critter/fish/sturgeon.htm>

### **Wanted: Kid Artists & Writers**

Check out the site below if you would like to contribute to Environmental Education For Kids EEK's Art Gallery. You can contribute pictures of nature and outdoor recreation or send a Big Fish Story, see below for more information:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/eek/cool/wanted.htm>